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ABSTRACT

The major objective of this study was to determine the needs and problems experienced by re-entered college students (those 25 years and older). Although limited to one institution, the sample was substantial in size. A questionnaire survey, mailed to all 2,958 re-entered students, was designed to determine whether or not any patterns existed in students' expressed needs and problems based on differences in sex, age, and length of interruption in schooling. Major findings were that women expressed more difficulties and concerns, more desire for counseling services, and more desire for re-entry services than did men. Length of interruption was a factor; the longer a student was away from schooling, the more he/she expressed difficulties and concerns. Age did not influence desire for counseling. Results are reported in detail, and a sample questionnaire is included. (Author/LBB)

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COLLEGE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte

RE-ENTRY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE NEEDS AND PROBLEMS OF THE RETURNING COLLEGE STUDENT

by

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and

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

August 4, 1977

Paper presented as partial fulfillment of
requirements for the
Master of Education Degree

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INTRODUCTION

Across the nation, students are returning to college campuses to continue their interrupted studies. According to the Bureau of Census, 3,227,000 adults twenty-five years of age and older were enrolled in or were attending college as of October 1974. This figure represents approximately 38 percent of the total college enrollment of the population sixteen years of age and over.

> During the 1960's approximately 78 percent of all students were attending full-time; however, in 1974 the proportion declined to 72 percent as part-time enrollment increased 50 percent and full-time enrollment increased 10 percent since 1970. The increase in the number of part-time college students is due to a large increase in the number of people twenty-five years old or over attending college in the past few years. Thus the fall 1974 college population was older and more likely to be enrolled part-time than in the 1960's.[1]

Although the older part-time students are helping lend needed financial support to colleges and universities, they are also challenging these institutions to provide appropriate and flexible curricula, as well as appropriate assistance in meeting their unique needs both at psychological and practical levels.

There are often difficulties involved with re-entry. Academia is not as easy, generally, for the person who has

been away from it as for the student who has continued it. Fears and doubts, plus other emotional and behavioral problems, cause additional hardships in adjusting to this new role.

Although the study of the subject of re-entry is becoming more widespread, the researchers were not able to locate any articles that dealt specifically with the returning male student, while much information was available about the returning female student. This preponderance of information about the returning female student may be due to the increase of information made available as a result of the advent of the Women's Liberation Movement. This study, however, will be directed to the re-entering male, as well as to the re-entering female.

The students surveyed in this study are enrolled at a medium sized, state supported southeastern university. This university appears to be in tune with the national enrollment trend; of its 1976 fall enrollment of 7,815, 38 percent were students twenty-five years of age and over.[2] In the past, this university has offered little help specifically for returning students; therefore, it is the purpose of this study to identify the needs and problems of these students so that programs and assistance to meet these needs may be initiated.

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Ruth Osborn,[3] Assistant Dean of Continuing Education, 1971, discussing George Washington University's program, "Developing New Horizons for Women," stated that more than 18,000 women participated in the fifteen session group guidance and counseling course, on- and off-campus, over a seven year period. The course utilized lectures, group discussions, testing, speakers, and individual counseling in its attempts to help students work through the problems of negative family attitudes and financial needs, as well as increase understanding of themselves, establish short and long-term goals, gain self-confidence, and learn to apply self-knowledge to their goals.

In 1972, L. S. Maris, counselor, and J. Mochizuki,[4] Director of Continuing Education, in their article, "Search for Fulfillment: A Program for Adult Women," related difficulties described by participants enrolled in their workshop for mature women as lack of involvement, goals, self-identity, growth and knowledge of possible options, plus loneliness, guilt, dependency, and self-depreciation. The goals of the workshop were: (1) to permit the participants, working in groups, to share concerns and encourage mutual support; (2) to improve communication skills to

better interpersonal relationships; (3) to build self-confidence through increased self-knowledge (including defense mechanisms used to maintain dependency); (4) to teach decision-making skills which would lead to increased independence; and (5) to explore opportunities for higher education, volunteerism, and employment.

In 1973, the President of Our Lady of Angels College in Aston, Pennsylvania, Sister Cunningham, O.S.F.,[5] described the Deferred Opportunity in Education Program developed by her college to help returning adult women students adjust. Because of information learned from a survey taken by mature women in that community, the college offered: (1) a non-credit summer course to help alleviate the high level of anxiety found to be common in re-entry; (2) special orientation programs; (3) a special open house where re-entering students could discuss their concerns; (4) a part-time counselor for re-entered students; and (5) special encounter groups to help meet other counseling needs. Husbands were encouraged to join their wives in as many of the offerings as possible since their support was felt to be vital to their wives' success. The author stated,

> If a college intends to provide education for the older student, it must build in flexibility and expect variations in the traditional approach to acquiring a degree. The older student cannot (and will not) completely fit into a system molded for an eighteen year old.[6]

Judith Brandenberg,[7] a counseling psychologist, wrote an article, "The Needs of Women Returning to School," in 1974, in which she listed the most common difficulties encountered by re-entered women: (1) feelings of dependency; (2) self-defeating behavior; and (3) coping with resistance from and competition with husbands, children, and friends. The author described a student group called "Women Involved in New Goals" (WING), organized to meet the needs of returning female students at Queens College of City University of New York, which made available a special admissions counselor, special programs and activities, and speakers at weekly meetings.

Eugenia Kelman and Bonnie Staley,[8] counseling center personnel, described the findings of a survey taken by re-entered women students in 1974 in their article, "The Returning Woman Student: Needs of an Important Minority on College Campuses." Results showed a majority of respondents desired academic or vocational counseling, academic skill-building workshops, a day care center, socials with older re-entered students, a special course for re-entry, and communication skills workshops.

Helen Astin,[9] 1974, a professor, describing the responses of a study done by the National Coalition for Research on Women's Education and Development, found problem areas to be: (1) lack of self-confidence;

(2) academic difficulties and fears; (3) organization of, as well as lack of time; (4) guilt; and (5) role conflicts. She discussed familial involvement and support concerning re-entry; most husbands had positive feelings about their wives' return to schooling because they saw them as happier, more actualized persons who would benefit the family intellectually and financially. Children generally were not as positive, but seemed to accept the situation.

Joann Powell and Anne Rodgers,[10] 1975, counseling center staff, cited a lack of self-confidence, fear of competing with younger students, and fear of knowledge gap as problems prevalent in re-entry. To help combat these problems, the school initiated a special orientation program for women over twenty-five to acquaint these new students with the facilities of the college, and to discover the needs and problems of women who were re-entering. The plan was extended to invite men to also use these services.

Roger McCannon,[11] 1975, affiliated with Drake University, described the positive effects on students who partook of the orientation and counseling program initiated by the university; their grade point averages were significantly higher at the end of the semester than were those of students who did not utilize these services. The program was designed to increase self-understanding, self-appraisal,

self-development, and emotional development.

Elizabeth Stone,[12] 1975, a professor, asserted that women comprised two-thirds to three-fourths of the total enrollment of adult education, primarily working on bachelors degrees and first careers, and that more than half of the country's 2,000 colleges may have been involved in Continuing Education for Women Programs. She stated that returning women students need a room of their own as a center, professional and peer counseling, free or low-cost workshops, and orientation courses which would carry credit, as well as classes scheduled at convenient times and locations (including weekends). The greatest difficulties experienced by women upon re-entry were self-doubts and lack of support from family and friends.

Patricia Thom, Anne Ironside, and Eileen Hendry,[13] 1975, staff members, described the program implemented at the University of British Columbia Centre for Continuing Education entitled, "Life Planning Service," as a series of short-term courses plus group and individual counseling. Staffed by professionals, interns, and trained peers, the Centre utilized group methods to enhance the participants' feelings and attitudes about themselves, as well as to better their relationships with families and friends.

In 1975, Margaret Geisler, Associate Director of the Office of Continuing Education Services, and Randolph A.

Thrush,[14] Professor of Counseling and Guidance, University of Wisconsin, conducted a study to identify problems encountered by older women students, plus their counseling experiences and needs. Problem areas cited most frequently by the women in this study were time pressures, role definition, lack of self-confidence, lack of sense of direction, child care, and scheduling of courses. Students requested counseling programs to facilitate educational progress, preferably counseling geared to the adult student by a counselor designated for that purpose only. Group discussions with other re-entered students were also requested.

Linda Brooks,[15] 1976, a counseling psychologist, focusing on married middle-class women who remained at home, found three issues particularly salient upon re-entry: (1) low self-confidence; (2) time management; and (3) role conflict and guilt. Ms. Brooks recommended group experiences in which women could share and support each other.

Rose Marie Roach,[16] 1976, Associate Dean of Students, wrote an article on the relationships of the re-entered women and their husbands and children in terms of balance theory. As a woman gives more time and attention to schooling, and less to her home and family, the family may become increasingly uncomfortable because of her diminished attentions and may withdraw some of the support and positive behavior they formerly offered her. She then might feel

less attracted to her home and family, causing still greater stress on these relationships.

Beatrice Taines,[17] 1976, a re-entry instructor, described the many fears and concerns experienced by returning female students; she stated they were: fear of competing; fear of failing; fear of rusty skills; time management; role conflicts; and husband resistance. A special re-entry program comprised of general education courses, socials with spouses, and a supportive atmosphere helped the students adjust to their new roles.

Summary

Concerns mentioned in the literature research were divisible into two areas, internally based and externally based. Internal concerns, those originating within the individuals, included: anxiety; dependency; self-defeating behaviors; self-depreciation; fear of failing; and academically related fears. Additionally, role conflicts were evidenced in negative family and friends attitudes, guilt, and need for adequate child care. Externally based concerns included problems with time, scheduling of courses, financial needs, and lack of knowledge of options. Child care needs might be included in this area also.

Goals of programs offered and/or assistance provided to alleviate re-entry concerns, similarly, were divided into

internally directed and externally directed. Internally directed aids included: counseling -- group and individual; peer and professional; academic, vocational and personal; and specifically designated re-entry; as well as that provided by encounter groups. Also offered were: special orientations; re-entry courses; workshops (communication, decision-making, academic skill-building, and self-development); and socials. Externally directed aids included: child care centers; appropriate scheduling of classes (location and time); and an office for non-students which contained pertinent information related to re-entry, such as financial aid availability, time management information, and career exploration data.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Objectives

The major objective of this project was to determine the needs and problems experienced by the returning college student. The study was designed to determine whether or not there were any patterns in the expressed needs and problems based upon differences in sex, age, and length of interruption in schooling.[18]

The major questions posed by the researchers were:

1. Are the re-entry needs and/or problems and the counseling desires of men and women different?
2. Is the length of interruption in schooling a major factor in the problems perceived by re-entered students?
3. Is the age of the re-entered student a factor in his/her desire for counseling?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis I

Re-entered women will express more difficulties and concerns than re-entered men.

Rationale: Society perceives the male role as being strong, logical, achieving, unsentimental, and emotionally

unexpressive;[19] therefore, the male has learned not to be comfortable with openness which includes expressing difficulties and concerns. The female, on the other hand, is more comfortable admitting difficulties and concerns.

Hypothesis II

Re-entered female students will be more desirous of counseling than will re-entered male students.

Rationale: As stated in the previous rationale, women are more comfortable asking for help for their difficulties and concerns than are men. Therefore, it would seem that women will more readily ask for counseling assistance.

Hypothesis III

Re-entered women would be more likely to use special re-entry services (appropriate orientation, and/or specialized credit course, and/or designated re-entry counselor) than would re-entered men.

Rationale: Studies show that a salient problem for re-entering women is lack of self-confidence. It would seem, therefore, that women would avail themselves of services, such as those listed in the hypothesis, to aid in their adjustment to their new academic setting. Re-entered men might view the expression of their desire for these services as denoting weakness, which conflicts with society's assigned role for them. Additionally, because of their

experience in the work world, men may feel more confident and more capable to enter into new situations and meet new challenges without the additional support that women desire.

Hypothesis IV

The longer a student has been out of school, the greater the expressed number of difficulties and concerns.

Rationale: Individuals who have been away from an academic environment for longer durations may feel more alienation than those who have been away for shorter durations. Therefore, they will express more difficulties and concerns.

Hypothesis V

The older the re-entered student, the greater the desire for counseling.

Rationale: Through personal experience, conversation with, and observations of re-entered students, it seems that the older the re-entered student, the more that difficulties and concerns are felt. If the student is cognizant of these difficulties and concerns, he/she will seek counseling and the support and reassurance it can provide.

Sample

Data for this study was collected at a medium sized, public southeastern university by means of a four-page printed questionnaire. Questionnaires (see Appendix) were mailed in January, 1977, to all students (2,958), twenty-five

years of age and over, who were registered at the university the fall semester of 1976. The empirical list of these students had been received from the university computer center. For the purposes of this study, re-entered students were defined as those students who had been out of school two years or more. Only those students who fit that definition were asked to fill in and return the questionnaire.

Instrument

A cover letter[20] explaining the purpose of the study was attached to the questionnaire; a close-ended precoded instrument containing eighty-eight questions. In order to ascertain its clarity, the instrument was given to three re-entered students (two females, one male) in November, 1976, who were asked to read the cover letter and answer the questions. No changes were found to be necessary.

The four page instrument was divided into four sections:

Section I, modeled after Kelman and Staley,[21] pertained to university services being considered for re-entry students. It included nine questions, each with a choice of three answers, "would use such a service," "might use," and "would not use." Five questions, 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7, were adapted from the

aforementioned study; questions 2, 5, 8, and 9 were developed by the researchers.

Section II, dealing with various counseling center services offered to students, was adapted from several counseling center pieces of literature. It was divided into two parts, each part containing twenty-four questions. Part A, measuring the respondents' knowledge of availability of the various services, offered three possible responses, "presently available," "not sure," and "presently unavailable." Part B, measuring the respondents' willingness to use such services, offered responses of "I would use," and "I would not use."

Section III, probing difficulties encountered upon re-entry, was constructed by the researchers. It included eighteen questions; the two answers available were "applicable to me," and "not applicable to me."

Section IV, constructed by the researchers, sought background material. Of the thirteen questions included, eleven required a single answer (age, sex, race, marital status, number of children, highest year of schooling completed, length of travel time to the university, working, and if so, hours worked per week, length of schooling interruption, and income), the remaining two, reasons for leaving and for re-entering, permitted multiple answers.

The questions included in the questionnaire were designed to allow the researchers to support or fail to support the hypotheses proposed. Questions dealt with difficulties and concerns were: Section III, questions 1-18 inclusive. Sex differences were shown by responses to Section IV, question 2. Desire for counseling was analyzed by Section I, questions 5(a) and 8, also Section II, questions 8, 9, and 13. Specific re-entry services were shown by responses to Section I, questions 6, 7, and 8. Section IV, question 12 measured the length of time away from school. Section IV, question 1 gave the researchers information about age.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis consisted of two stages. In the univariate analysis stage, the researchers studied each measure individually in terms of frequency distribution, measures of dispersion, and appropriate measures of central tendency. This was done to ascertain whether or not any of the measures needed to be redefined empirically, and whether or not any measures needed to be eliminated from further analysis. Additionally, respondents' social characteristics were studied and compared to those of the university's total population when these statistics were available.

In the second stage, the researchers measured the relationships as stated in the various hypotheses and considered the form and degree of associations to determine whether or not the hypotheses were supported or failed to be supported. Appropriate measures of association were used corresponding to the levels of measurement of variables under investigation. Contingency tables were constructed for each of the hypotheses analyzed.

Univariate Stage

Table 1 reflects re-entered students' preference for services which deal primarily with assimilation into the university community. The largest group of students, 322 (55.2 percent) wrote they would use a designated re-entry admissions/counselor, while another 165 (28.3 percent) wrote they might use this service. Totaling these figures, 487 (83.5 percent) students would or might use this service. The second most desirable service was an appropriate orientation to campus; 260 (44.6 percent) would use this service and 180 (30.9 percent) might. Combining these, 440 (75.5 percent) would or might use this orientation. A specialized credit course would be used by 205 (35.2 percent) and might be used by 188 (32.2 percent), adding up to 393 (67.4 percent) of re-entered students who responded positively to this option.

A majority of students selected the response might use in preference to would use or would not use for social functions with other students and spouses or companions, social functions with other re-entering students, peer counselors for assistance, an exclusive lounge area, and a re-entry column. This seems to show these students were withholding commitment until knowing what the university would include in these services.

TABLE 1

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF USE OF SERVICES BY RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS
(N = 583) 1977

Services	Would Use Such a Service	Might Use	Would Not Use	Total
Day Care Center on/near Campus	108 (18.5)	102 (17.5)	369 (63.3)	579 (99.3%)
Exclusive Lounge Area	137 (23.5)	259 (44.4)	186 (31.9)	582 (99.8%)
Social Functions with Other Re-entering Students	98 (16.8)	264 (45.3)	219 (37.6)	581 (99.7%)
Social Functions with Other Students and Spouses or Companions	108 (18.5)	291 (49.9)	179 (30.7)	578 (99.1%)
Peer Counselors to Assist Me	157 (26.9)	260 (44.6)	153 (26.2)	570 (97.8)
Peer Counselors-I'd Like to Assist Others	110 (18.9)	152 (26.1)	223 (38.3)	485 (83.2)
Appropriate Orientation to Campus	260 (44.6)	180 (30.9)	139 (23.8)	579 (99.3

*Difference between number shown and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between the percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Services	Would Use Such a Service	Might Use	Would Not Use	Total
Specialized Credit Course for Re-entering Students	205 (35.2)	188 (32.2)	176 (30.2)	569 (97.6%
Designated Re-entry Admissions/counselor	322 (55.2)	165 (28.3)	90 (15.4)	577 (99.0%
Re-entry Column in Campus Newspaper	134 (23.0)	235 (40.3)	204 (35.0)	573 (98.3%

*Difference between number shown and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between the percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

Four hundred and eighty-five (83.2 percent) of the total population chose to respond to the question of assisting others as a peer counselor; 110 (18.9 percent) opted to use this service even without knowing anything about the service, even whether or not pay might be included for this position. More information seemed desirable to 152 (26.1 percent) who wrote they might use this.

The day care center question received the only negative majority response. Since presently re-entered students responded, and no day care service is available, it appears those students who needed this have made other arrangements, and those who could not make adequate arrangements have not re-entered.

In Table 2, the first seven variables deal with offerings from Educational Services. Over half the respondents indicated they would use speed reading, making it the most desired service. Paper-writing skills, tutorial help, time management, and note taking study skills all received positive responses from more than one out of three. Of the eleven workshop choices included in this table, career development was the most desired; the remaining social-emotional offerings were preferred by many (more than two out of five), excluding marriage enrichment, values clarification, and single again (the least favored). The remaining variables provide information

TABLE 2

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF USE OF COUNSELING CENTER SERVICES BY RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Services	Would Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Speed Reading	300 (51.5)	267 (45.8)	567 (97.3%)
Remedial Reading	66 (11.3)	498 (85.4)	564 (96.7%)
Note Taking Study Skills	195 (33.4)	377 (64.7)	572 (98.1%)
Time Management	199 (34.1)	365 (62.6)	564 (96.7%)
Tutorial Help	228 (39.1)	335 (57.5)	563 (96.6%)
Paper-writing Skills	270 (46.3)	295 (50.6)	565 (96.9%)
Brief Hand	139 (23.8)	402 (69.0)	541 (92.8%)
Individual Counseling	349 (59.9)	215 (36.9)	564 (96.7%)
Marital Counseling	156 (26.8)	410 (70.3)	566 (97.1%)
Workshops			
a. Anxiety Reduction	241 (41.3)	330 (56.6)	571 (97.9%)
b. Assertiveness Training	267 (45.8)	300 (51.5)	567 (97.3%)

*Difference between number shown and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between the percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Services	Would Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Workshops (Continued)			
c. Self-Modification	235 (40.3)	330 (56.6)	565 (96.9%)
d. Career Development	327 (56.1)	242 (41.5)	569 (97.6%)
e. Life Planning	240 (41.2)	328 (56.3)	568 (97.4%)
f. Values Clairfication	182 (31.2)	382 (65.5)	564 (96.7%)
g. Single Again	87 (14.9)	476 (81.6)	563 (96.6%)
h. Communication Skills	291 (49.9)	275 (47.2)	566 (97.1%)
i. Decision Making	254 (43.6)	316 (54.2)	570 (97.8%)
j. Self-Appreciation	238 (40.8)	329 (56.4)	567 (97.3%)
k. Marriage Enrichment	209 (35.8)	363 (62.3)	572 (98.1%)
Carrer Exploration	340 (58.3)	224 (38.4)	564 (96.7%)
Vocation and Personality Testing	318 (54.5)	251 (43.1)	568 (97.6%)
Evening Counseling	272 (46.7)	291 (49.9)	563 (96.6%)

*Difference between number shown and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between the percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Services	Would Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Education-Vocational Information	335 (57.5)	[illegible]28 ([illegible]9.1)	563 (96.6%)**

*Difference between number shown and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between the percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

about desire for counseling services. Education-Vocational information, and vocation and personality testing received positive responses from more than half the respondents; evening counseling was not far behind, with 46.7 percent answering favorably, but one out of four indicated they would use marital counseling.

Of the questions in the difficulties section, only seven received one-third or more positive response from the respondents (see Table 3). The most positive responses were in the area of time; 417 (71.5 percent) found that a lack of time was a difficulty, and 348 (59.7 percent) expressed a difficulty with time management. However, only 34.1 percent of the respondents indicated they would use the Educational Services offering which deals with time management (see Table 2). The next highest responses dealt with the respondents' fears concerning academic performance; fear of dulled memory - 248 (42.5 percent), fear of not being smart enough - 223 (38.3 percent), both fear of failing and question ability to study and learn - 215 (36.9 percent). Difficulty with admissions procedures, 207 (35.5 percent) is the last within this grouping.

Statistics included in the following discussions which relate to the total population were obtained from the University Planning Office for the Fall Semester, 1976. Additionally, there was a discrepancy in the number of

TABLE 3

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF EXPRESSED DIFFICULTIES AND CONCERNS OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Difficulties and Concerns	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Difficulty w/Spouse Over Re-entering	115 (19.7)	466 (79.9)	581 (99.7%)
Difficulty w/Children Over Re-entering	103 (17.7)	478 (82.0)	581 (99.7%)
Difficulty w/Friends Over Re-entering	86 (14.8)	495 (84.9)	581 (99.7%)
Difficulty with Admissions Procedures	207 (35.5)	373 (64.0)	580 (99.5%)
Difficulty with Time Management	348 (59.7)	229 (39.3)	577 (99.0%)
Lack of Time	417 (71.5)	155 (26.6)	572 (98.1%)
Lack of Communication Skills	153 (26.2)	418 (71.7)	571 (97.9%)
Fear of Failing	215 (36.9)	359 (61.6)	574 (98.5%)

*Difference between number shown and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between the percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Difficulties and Concerns	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Fear of Succeeding	67 (11.5)	506 (86.8)	573 (98.3%)
Fear of Dulled Memory	248 (42.5)	328 (56.3)	576 (98.8%)
Fear of not Being Smart Enough	223 (38.3)	353 (60.5)	576 (98.8%)
Question Ability to Study and Learn	215 (36.9)	358 (61.4)	573 (98.3%)
Embarrassment at Changing Goals	79 (13.6)	497 (85.2)	576 (98.8%)
Embarrassment at Age Difference Compared to Other Students	80 (13.7)	494 (84.7)	574 (98.5%)
Guilt for Pursuing My Own Goals	93 (16.0)	483 (82.8)	576 (98.8%)
Guilt for Spending Family Money on my Education	115 (19.7)	462 (79.2)	577 (99.0%)
Competition with my Own Children's Grades	22 (3.8)	551 (94.5)	573 (98.3%)

*Difference between number shown and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between the percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Difficulties and Concerns	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Competition with Other University Students' Grades	113 (19.4)	453 (77.7)	566 (97.1%)**

*Difference between number shown and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between the percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

questionnaires mailed and the total enrollment of students twenty-five years and over. The computer printed 2,958 labels rather than 3,019; this was discovered after the survey had been completed. Furthermore, 360 students from an extension program were included in the survey's population; however, the social characteristics of these students were not included in the statistics that follow concerning the total population obtained from the University Planning Office.

The following information pertains to the demographic information obtained from the survey.

Because of low response rate, the last two classifications in the age variable were combined; fifty - fifty-four and fifty-five and older were joined and reclassified to fifty and older. As shown in Table 4, almost half of the respondents were under thirty years of age. The numbers of respondents decreased proportionately as age increased, paralleling the percentages of the total population. The total population figures read as follows: more than half (51.7 percent) of all students enrolled were twenty-five - twenty-nine, 24.1 percent were thirty - thirty-four, 11.1 percent were thirty-five - thirty-nine, .07 percent were forty - forty-four, .04 percent were forty-five - forty-nine, and .02 percent were fifty and older.

TABLE 4

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF AGES OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Age	N	%
29 or Younger	284	48.7
30 - 34	141	24.2
35 - 39	62	10.6
40 - 44	38	6.5
45 - 49	32	5.5
50 and Older	20	3.4
	577*	99.0**

*Difference between this number and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between this percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

Total university enrollment was 4,214 males (53.9 percent) and 3,601 females (46.1 percent). Total enrollment for those twenty-five and over was 1,453 males (48.1 percent) and 1,566 females (51.9 percent). Survey response was 242 males (41.5 percent) and 335 females (57.5 percent). While more males were registered in the university generally, more females twenty-five and over were enrolled and more respondents were females.

The total university Black enrollment was 7.5 percent; the percentage of Black respondents was 4.6 percent. Total Caucasian enrollment was 91.8 percent; the percentage of Caucasian respondents was 93.1 percent. Due to a small number of responses, the third category of this variable, race, was changed to non-response.

Marital status for the university as a whole was recorded as follows: single, 56 percent; married, 40 percent; separated, 1 percent; divorced, 2 percent; and widowed, 1 percent. As might be expected, a much larger percentage of the total population was single; traditionally-aged undergraduate students would account for the difference. Likewise, a greater percentage of re-entered students were married. Even though Table 6 shows the widowed classification, it was found necessary to redefine this category to non-response because of the low number of replies.

TABLE 5

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF MARITAL STATUS OF
RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS
(N = 583) 1977

Marital Status	N	%
Single	96	16.5
Married	419	71.9
Separated	21	3.6
Divorced	34	5.8
Widowed	4	0.7
	574*	98.5**

*Difference between this number and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between this percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

Approximately 60 percent of the respondents had one or more children. This additional role adds responsibilities not experienced by the non-parent (see Table 6).

Because of the ambiguity of the wording of this variable, it was impossible to definitively interpret the point of re-entry. It appears that more than half the respondents completed at least four years of college before returning. It was interesting to note the small percentage of those returning after no college, or one year of college (see Table 7).

Travel time categories 3, 4, and 5 (one and one-half to two hours, two to two and one-half hours, and two and one-half hours or more) were combined to simply one and one-half hours or more because of low response. The greatest majority of students traveled approximately an hour; because of the prime location of the university, many areas (urban, suburban, and rural) are within an hour's trip to the institute (see Table 8).

Almost three out of four respondents worked (74.1 percent); Table 9 indicates the number of hours these students worked. The number of students who worked full time is not known because there was no category for this information. One person who responded positively to working did not reply to the number of hours he/she worked. It is interesting to note that only 12.8 percent of the respondents worked less than twenty hours weekly.

TABLE 6

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Number of Children	N	%
0	232	39.8
1	121	20.8
2	154	26.4
3	44	7.5
4	20	3.4
5 or More	10	1.7
	581*	99.7**

*Difference between this number and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between this percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

TABLE 7

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF HIGHEST YEAR OF SCHOOLING OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Year Completed	N	%
High School	28	4.8
1 Year of College	24	4.1
2 Years of College	131	22.5
3 Years of College	78	13.4
4 Years of College	215	36.9
5 Years of College	59	10.1
6 or More Years of College	44	7.5
	579*	99.3**

*Difference between this number and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between this percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

TABLE 8

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF TRAVEL TIME BY RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Travel Time	N	%
Less than 1 Hour	504	86.4
1 Hour or More but Less than 1-1/2 Hours	61	10.5
1-1/2 Hours or More	17	3.0
	582*	99.8**

*Difference between this response and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between this percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

TABLE 9

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF HOURS WORKED BY RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Number of Hours	N	%
1 - 4	9	1.5
5 - 9	29	5.0
10 - 19	37	6.3
20 or More	356	61.1
	431*	73.9**

*Difference between this response and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between this percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

It was noted on the questionnaire that more than one reply could be made for the respondents' reasons for leaving school; therefore, the individual's prime reason for leaving is not ascertainable. However, almost half indicated they left because they had completed a degree; this relates to Table 7, in which many respondents designated they had completed four years or more of college (see Table 10).

This variable, similar to the preceding one, allowed for more than one response. The reason most commonly expressed for re-entering was to earn a degree; the second most prevalent response was personal growth. That such a large percentage chose the latter seems indicative of re-entering students' concerns for social-emotional development (Table 11).

Table 12 reveals that only 25.7 percent of the respondents were out of school longer than ten years. This corresponds with Table 4 which indicated that approximately 49 percent of the respondents were under thirty years old.

Approximately one-third of the respondents had a gross annual family income of $20,000 or more. Additionally, another 44.2 percent had an income of between $15,000 and $20,000. It is interesting that less than 10 percent had an income of under $5,000 yearly. The last category,

TABLE 10

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR LEAVING SCHOOL BY RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Reasons for Leaving	N	%
To Go to Work	125	21.4
To Enter the Military	59	10.1
To Get Married and/or Raise a Family	123	21.1
Lack of Funds	74	12.7
Completed a Degree	291	49.9
Moved	36	6.2
Other	90	15.4

TABLE 11

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR RE-ENTERING BY RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Reasons for Re-entering	N	%
Not to Earn a Degree	23	3.9
To Earn a Degree	464	79.6
To Advance in Present Job	164	28.1
To Acquire New Relationships	94	16.1
To Train for Change in Occupation	253	43.4
For Social Status	54	9.3
To Grow as a Person	378	64.8
Other	68	11.7

TABLE 12

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF LENGTH OF SCHOOLING INTERRUPTION OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Years	N	%
2 - 4	233	40.0
4-1/2 - 10	193	33.1
10-1/2 - 15	66	11.3
15-1/2 - 20	43	7.4
More than 20	41	7.0
	576*	98.8**

*Difference between number and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between this percentage and 100% is due to non-response.

don't know, was changed to no response because of the small number of replies.

TABLE 13

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF 1976 GROSS INCOME OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS AND/OR SPOUSES (N = 583) 1977

Amount	N	%
$4,999 and Under	47	8.1
$5,000 - 9,999	85	14.6
$10,000 - 14,999	126	21.6
$15,000 - 19,999	132	22.6
$20,000 and Over	179	30.7
	563*	97.6**

*Difference between this number and N is due to non-response.

**Difference between this percentage and 100% is due to lack of response.

Bivariate Analysis

This section will include the hypotheses and tables indicating support or non-support for each. A brief summation of the salient factors will follow.

Hypothesis I

Re-entered women will express more difficulties and concerns than re-entered men.

Support for this hypothesis is apparent in that women responded more positively to sixteen of the eighteen questions presented than did men. The greatest difference between the male and female positive responses, as might be expected, was 19.4 percent, in the area of difficulty with children over re-entry, even though the total positive response was approximately 33 percent (see Table 14a). The next most significant difference was the fear of dulled memory with a 12.9 percent difference (see Table 14b). Guilt for spending family money on own education, guilt for pursuing own goals, and lack of time all fell within a 10 percent difference range (see Tables 14c, 14d, and 14e). Difficulty with admissions procedures, fear of not being smart enough, and difficulty with spouse over re-entering all came within a 7 percent difference range. The remainder of the responses showed little differences. Additionally, only in the areas of admissions procedures and competition

TABLE 14a

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH CHILDREN OVER RE-ENTRY
BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS
(N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	16 (6.6)	225 (93.0)	241 (99.6%)
Female	87 (26.0)	248 (74.0)	335 (100.0%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between this percent and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 14b

EXPRESSED FEAR OF DULLED MEMORY BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED
UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	86 (35.5)	155 (64.0)	241 (99.6%)
Female	162 (48.4)	173 (51.6)	335 (100.0%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between this percent and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 14c

EXPRESSED GUILT FOR SPENDING FAMILY MONEY ON EDUCATION BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	34 (14.0)	208 (86.0)	242 (100.0%)**
Female	81 (24.2)	254 (75.8)	335 (100.0%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 14d

EXPRESSED GUILT FOR PURSUING OWN GOALS BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	25 (10.3)	217 (89.7)	242 (100.0%)**
Female	68 (20.3)	266 (79.4)	334 (99.4%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 14e

EXPRESSED LACK OF TIME BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	161 (66.5)	81 (33.5)	242 (100.0%)
Female	256 (76.4)	74 (22.1)	330 (98.5%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percent and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

with other university students' grades did the male percentages exceed the female percentages (see Appendix A).

Hypothesis II

Re-entered female students will be more desirous of counseling than will re-entered male students.

Re-entered women expressed a greater desire for counseling than did re-entered men. However, the differences between male and female positive responses was 10 percent or less in the five counseling variables. The desire for peer counseling showed the greatest difference (10.0 percent) between males and females.

In order to compare the questions of peer counseling and re-entry admissions/counselor, which offered an additional response choice than did the other three counseling variables, for this discussion, the researchers combined the former's would use and might use responses. The would not use response category is listed on the tables.

Re-entry counseling was the most desired service; 288 (86.0 percent) female respondents indicated that they would use or might use such a service, and 194 (80.2 percent) males indicated a similar response (see Table 15a). The next most desired service was peer counselors to assist students; 254 (75.8 percent) of the re-entered females and 160 (66.1 percent) of the re-entered males indicated they would use or might use this service (see Table 15b).

TABLE 15a

DESIRE FOR RE-ENTRY ADMISSIONS/COUNSELOR BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Would Use Such a Service	Might Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Male	127 (52.5)	67 (27.7)	47 (19.4)	241 (99.6%)
Female	192 (57.3)	96 (28.7)	42 (12.5)	330 (98.5%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 15b

DESIRE FOR PEER COUNSELING BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Would Use Such a Service	Might Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Male	55 (22.7)	105 (43.4)	77 (31.8)	237 (97.9%)
Female	101 (30.1)	153 (45.7)	73 (21.8)	327 (97.6%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 15c

DESIRE FOR INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Would Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Male	143 (59.1)	95 (39.3)	238 (98.3%)**
Female	205 (61.2)	115 (34.3)	320 (95.5%)**

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between this percent and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 15d

DESIRE FOR EVENING COUNSELING BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Would Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Male	111 (45.9)	126 (52.1)	237 (97.9%)**
Female	158 (47.2)	163 (48.7)	321 (95.8%)**

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between this percent and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

The difference between the positive responses by males and females for individual and evening counseling are similar. However, the percentages of positive responses were greater for individual counseling than for evening counseling (see Tables 15c and 15d).

It is interesting to note, in light of national divorce trends, the lack of interest expressed in marital counseling. Since this was the only variable totally non-school related, perhaps this is indicative of respondents' desire to separate personal life from school life (see Table 15e).

Hypothesis III

Re-entered women would be more likely to use special re-entry services (appropriate orientation, and/or specialized credit course, and/or designated re-entry counselor) than would re-entered men.

The following tables indicate that re-entry services were more likely to be used by re-entered women than men. The greatest difference in positive response percentages was evidenced in appropriate orientation; 16.9 percent more women than men would use this service. Combining the positive possibilities, would use and might use, 288 (86.0 percent) females and 194 (80.2 percent) males preferred a re-entry counselor's service (see Table 15a); 273 (81.5 percent) females and 163 (67.4 percent) males preferred

TABLE 15e

DESIRE FOR MARITAL COUNSELING BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Would Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Male	58 (24.0)	178 (73.6)	236 (97.5%)
Female	97 (29.0)	228 (68.1)	325 (97.0%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between this percent and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

an appropriate orientation to campus (see Table 16a); 230 (68.7 percent) females and 158 (65.3 percent) males preferred a specialized re-entry course (see Table 16b). It is notable that a high percentage of men indicated a positive response for these special re-entry services.

Hypothesis IV

The longer a student has been out of school, the greater the expressed number of difficulties and concerns.

Support for this hypothesis was shown by the percentages of the first and last groupings (0 and 11 or more difficulties and concerns) in Table 17. These statistics show that 10.3 percent of those respondents away from schooling two - four years expressed no difficulties or concerns, while 3.0 percent of this same group had 11 or more; 2.7 percent of those out of school 10-1/2 or more years expressed no difficulties or concerns while 10.7 percent had 11 or more. However, an analysis of the entire table seemed to weaken the support. The strength of association, while not overwhelming, is positive.

Because only 7 percent of the respondents expressed 11 or more difficulties, it was found necessary to collapse the table combining the categories 11 and above and relabel this category 11 or more. Additionally, due to the small number of cases found in the last three interruption

TABLE 16a

DESIRE FOR APPROPRIATE ORIENTATION BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Would Use Such a Service	Might Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Male	84 (34.7)	79 (32.6)	78 (32.2)	241 (99.6%)
Female	173 (51.6)	100 (29.9)	59 (17.6)	332 (99.1%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 16b

DESIRE FOR RE-ENTRY COURSE BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Would Use Such a Service	Might Use	Would Not Use	Total*
Male	84 (34.7)	74 (30.6)	78 (32.2)	236 (97.5%)
Female	118 (35.2)	112 (33.4)	97 (29.0)	327 (97.6%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 17

NUMBER OF EXPRESSED DIFFICULTIES AND CONCERNS BY LENGTH OF INTERRUPTION OF SCHOOLING BY RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Years of Interruption	Difficulties and Concerns 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11 or More	Total*
2 - 4	24 (10.3)	18 (7.7)	37 (15.9)	29 (12.4)	27 (11.6)	19 (8.2)	22 (9.4)	17 (7.3)	16 (6.9)	8 (3.4)	9 (3.9)	7 (3.0)	233 (40.5%)
4-1/2 - 10	12 (6.2)	13 (6.7)	24 (12.4)	26 (13.5)	16 (8.3)	20 (10.4)	21 (10.9)	12 (6.2)	9 (4.7)	16 (8.3)	7 (3.6)	17 (8.8)	193 (33.5%)
10-1/2 - and More	4 (2.7)	16 (10.7)	12 (8.0)	15 (10.0)	17 (11.3)	19 (12.7)	11 (7.3)	12 (8.0)	10 (6.7)	12 (8.0)	6 (4.0)	16 (10.7)	150 (26.0%)
	40 (6.9)	47 (8.2)	73 (12.7)	70 (12.2)	60 (10.4)	58 (10.1)	54 (9.4)	41 (7.1)	35 (6.1)	36 (6.3)	22 (3.8)	40 (6.9)	576 (100.0%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response.

**The percentage shown is the total of only those who responded to this variable; 576 equals 98.8% of N.

categories (10-1/2 - 15, 15-1/2 - 20, and more than 20 years), it was found necessary to combine these three groupings and relabel this category 10-1/2 or more years (see Table 17).

Hypothesis V

The older the re-entered student, the greater the desire for counseling.

This hypothesis is refuted. Overall it can be stated that age was unrelated to desire for counseling, even though category 5 (see Table 18), the desire for the greatest number of counseling services, showed an inverse relationship to this hypothesis.

Notable is the strong desire for counseling by more than half the respondents of all ages. This was determined by dividing the table into the following two sections, a weak desire (0, 1, or 2 desires for counseling services) and a strong desire (3, 4, or 5 desires) and combining the totals for these sections. The following percentages by age groups indicate this strong desire for counseling: twenty-five - twenty-nine, 61.3 percent; thirty - thirty-four, 70.3 percent; thirty-five - thirty-nine, 61.3 percent; forty - forty-four, 63.1 percent; forty-five - forty-nine, 65.7 percent; and fifty and over, 55.0 percent.

TABLE 18

DESIRED NUMBER OF COUNSELING SERVICES BY AGE OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Age	Counseling Services 0	1	2	3	4	5	Total*
25 - 29	26 (9.2)	33 (11.6)	51 (18.0)	63 (22.2)	67 (23.6)	44 (15.5)	284 (49.2%)
30 - 34	5 (3.5)	12 (8.5)	25 (17.7)	40 (28.4)	39 (27.7)	20 (14.2)	141 (24.4%)
35 - 39	6 (9.7)	8 (12.9)	10 (16.1)	23 (37.1)	7 (11.3)	8 (12.9)	62 (10.7%)
40 - 44	3 (7.9)	3 (7.9)	8 (21.1)	10 (26.3)	10 (26.3)	4 (10.5)	38 (6.6%)
45 - 49	1 (3.1)	5 (15.6)	5 (15.6)	10 (31.3)	9 (28.1)	2 (6.3)	32 (5.5%)
50 or Older	1 (5.0)	3 (15.0)	5 (25.0)	5 (25.0)	5 (25.0)	1 (5.0)	20 (3.5%)
	42 (7.3)	64 (11.1)	104 (18.0)	151 (26.2)	137 (23.7)	79 (13.9)	577 (100.0%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response.

**The percentage shown is the total of only those who responded to this variable; 577 equals 99.0% of N.

CONCLUSIONS

The major focus of this study was to determine the needs and problems experienced by re-entered college students. Additionally, it was felt necessary to ascertain whether or not there were any patterns in these areas based upon differences in sex, age, and interruption of schooling.

Analysis of the data indicated that a pattern did exist in the areas of differences between men and women. Women expressed more difficulties and concerns as well as a greater desire for counseling and re-entry services. However, many men too expressed concern, especially in the areas of time and academically related fears. Men also expressed a strong desire for re-entry, peer, and individual counseling, as well as for all designated re-entry services.

Overall, it was found that age did not influence the desire for counseling. A surprisingly large number of respondents of all ages indicated this desire.

The longer the students were away from schooling, the more difficulties, concerns, and fears they experienced. It was interesting to note that students who had interrupted their schooling the longest (twenty or more years), expressed the most concern over academically related fears.

In spite of the low response rate of this study (approximately 20 percent), it is significant that the

social characteristics of the respondents and the total university population were similar as far as could be ascertained. Those areas for which figures were available were age, sex, race, and marital status.

Additional salient demographic information was as follows: this student body was primarily white, under thirty, married and had at least one child, employed, had an income of $15,000 or more annually, were beyond their fourth year of college, and had re-entered mainly to earn a degree and for personal growth.

Recommendations

Being involved with re-entered students and researching this subject for the past year has given the researchers an opportunity for increased knowledge of this group's needs and desires, as well as a view of many areas in which service can efficiently be implemented. The following recommendations are based primarily on the respondents' indicated preferences.

Since more than half of the respondents indicated a strong desire for counseling, it would seem appropriate for the university to develop a program of re-entry counseling, and publicize that it is equipped to handle this group's needs and problems. The services of a re-entry admissions/counselor were most desired by respondents in this study.

An office, opened evenings as well as days, staffed by this person and possibly peer counselors as well, could offer initial reception to prospective students. In addition to this, the counselor would coordinate other re-entry activities, such as: the composition of a newsletter listing university services, workshops, and other information pertaining to re-entry which might be included in a mailing sent immediately after registration, to re-entered students; initial counseling for prospective students not entitled to other university professional counseling; short-term counseling for re-entry involved anxieties; leading on-campus workshops, summer and winter, designed to help prospective students deal with concerns of re-entering; and dealing with staff and faculty to facilitate understanding of re-entry fears, concerns, and problems.

Publicity relating to the newly formed peer counselor group seems very important. Placing eye-catching posters in key positions, such as on the Bookstore calendar area and at coffee and soda machines all over campus would surely increase re-entered students' awareness of this beginning service. Off-campus publicity, possibly through newspapers, radio and television, could inform interested groups in the community that these re-entered students would be available for speaking engagements, and how arrangements for this service could be made.

Respondents requested an appropriate orientation; enlarging upon the one offered in the past, and publicizing it by mailings sent to all re-entering students (not just undergraduates) seems advantageous. A larger number of students could attend if it were given at a time generally more convenient for those who were married and had children, perhaps on a weekend, Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Offering child care (also as in the past) for younger children does permit greater attendance; thus it should be available. Offering a spouse and an older children's orientation might well help ease the tensions reported as a difficulty encountered upon re-entry by some. Offering workshops for families a few times during the school year to deal with problems involving re-entry might be helpful.

Publicizing the re-entry course also offered in the past, and presenting it on a continuous basis, day and evening if possible, preferably off-campus to include those uncomfortable about traveling to the unversity, would address the desire expressed by respondents. The course also could be abbreviated and offered as a workshop during each semester.

Difficulty with admissions procedures expressed by many respondents could be alleviated by further sensitizing all admissions staff, graduate and undergraduate, to the problems, emotionaland factual, encountered by prospective

re-entry students. Workshops designed with this in mind would probably facilitate increased understanding, and lessen the difficulties.

Time management, a difficulty for a majority of respondents, as well as other expressed academic concerns, have been addressed in workshops offered through Educational Services. Perhaps publicizing them more, through the re-entry counselor's newsletter and the campus newspaper, and having them available during evenings as well as days would be helpful. Perhaps Counseling Center fact sheets on these topics could be placed in easily accessible spots, for instance, in or near the Bookstore.

In order to ascertain the number and composition of the re-entered student body, it would seem advisable for this data to be obtained at the same time other demographic information is acquired. These questions could be added to those presented each semester for the university's use.

Limitations

The prime limitation of this study was the low rate of response using the mailed questionnaire. However, this data collection approach was most efficient time-wise as well as being the most economically feasible. Bulk mailing is not as personal as is First Class mail; some possible participants may have discarded the study without reading it.

While return postage was paid by the Dean of Students Office, funds were not available for a follow-up letter to enhance the response rate.

A second limitation was the lack of opportunity for re-entered students to suggest services they desired. An open-ended question could have been a vehicle for this, or a section requesting comments.

An additional limitation was the omission of questions in the demographic section; ascertaining the level (undergraduate or graduate) of the respondents, the length of time back in school, and the defined work-load of employed students (full or part-time) would have been useful. Because more than one response was permitted, the individual respondent's prime reason for leaving and re-entering school is unknown.

Another limitation was caused by a lack of clarity in some terminology; even though the instrument was pre-tested for explictness, there were some vague phrases. The terms, "brief hand," "length of time out of school," "fear of succeeding," and "highest year of schooling completed" may not have been precise. A brief explanation accompanying each of these terms on the questionnaire might have been helpful.

Furthermore, a lack of standardized response was a limitation. Using just a "would use - would not use"

selection would have been more informative than also using a "would use - might use - would not use" selection.

Suggestions for Further Study

Further research would be beneficial in areas not clarified by this study. One such area is the question of needs, problems, and possible solutions viewed by faculty, administration, and re-entered students' families. A random study, using an interview technique, of these three groups would elicite information useful to the university.

A further study, obtaining information from people who are not students, but likely to enroll, would be very informative. Those to be surveyed could be selected from rosters of Continuing Education Courses, service organizations, professional groups, etc. Learning the feelings and desires of prospective students could greatly help those planning the support systems for new students.

Additional research into re-entered students desires and suggestions for further services the university might offer, would be enlightening and helpful. Seeking information about socials, services desired, and the extent to which this group wants to become involved with the university would add additional dimensions. It would seem that peer counselors could be a helpful resource, interviewing people with whom they speak on campus could fulfill this task.

A study concerning orientation would give those organizing this facet of acclamation into the university some valuable information. Learning the most convenient day, and information desired by those attending would surely be helpful.

In order to increase valuable knowledge gained through this study, more useful information could be provided by eliciting answers to the section of the study concerning difficulties and concerns on a continuum. This would be a much more precise gauge for assessing the degree of feelings of the respondents.

FOOTNOTES

[1]U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Population Characteristics," Series P-20, No. 278 (Feb. 1975), p. 2.

[2]Office of Institutional Research at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, "U.N.C.C. Fact Book," p. I-A-2-76.

[3]Ruth Helm Osborn, "Developing New Horizons for Women," Adult Leadership, 20, April 1971, pp. 326-360.

[4]L. S. Maris and J. Mochizuki, "Search for Fulfillment: A Program for Adult Women," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 50, March 1972, pp. 4-9.

[5]Sister Madonna Maria Cunningham, "The Older Student," (1973), p. 10.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Judith Berman Brandenburg, "The Needs of Women Returning to School," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 53, September 1974, pp. 11-18.

[8]Eugenia Kelman and Bonnie Staley, "The Returning Women Student: Needs of an Important Minority Group on College Campuses," Student Development Report, 12 (2) Ft. Collens: University Counseling Center, Colorado State University, 1974.

[9]Helen Stanridou Astin, "Continuing Education and the Development of Adult Women," The Counseling Psychologist, 6 (1), 1976, pp. 55-60.

[10]Joann Powell and Anne Rodgers, "Orientation to College: Meeting the Needs of Mature Women," Journal of College Student Personnel, 16 (5), September 1975, p. 432.

[11]Roger S. McCannon, "Effectiveness of an Orientation and Counseling Program for Adult Evening Students at Drake University," Paper presented at the Adult Education Research Conference, April 1975, pp. 1-16.

[12]Elizabeth Stone, "Women's Programs Grow Up," Change, 7, November 1975, pp. 16-20.

[13]Patricia Thom, et al., "The Women's Resources Centre: An Educational Model for Counseling Women," Adult Leadership, 24 December 1975, pp. 129-132.

[14]Margaret P. Geisler and Randolph S. Thrush, "Counseling Experiences and Needs of Older Women Students," Journal of NAWDAC, 39 (1), Fall 1975, pp. 3-7.

[15]Linda Brooks, "Supermoms Shift Gears: Re-Entry Women," The Counseling Psychologist, 6 (2), 1976, pp. 33-37.

[16]Rose Marie Roach, "Honey, Won't You Please Stay Home," Personnel and Guidance Journal, October 1976, 55 (2), pp. 86-89.

[17]Beatrice Taines, "First Semester of the Diablo Valley College Women's Re-Entry Program, Fall 1972, and a Program for Women at Diablo Valley College." April 1976, pp. 1-17.

[18]This university, through the Dean of Students Office and the Counseling Center, has indicated an interest in the re-entered student with verbal and financial support. A re-entry committee was formed by the Dean of Students Office to define and implement programs to help re-entered students adjust to their new environment. Both researchers of this project are members of the aforementioned committee.

[19]Sidney M. Journard, The Transparent Self, (1971), p. 35.

[20]The cover letter was signed by Dr. R. B. Simono, Director of the U.N.C.C. Counseling Center. Cost of postage was furnished by the Counseling Center and Office of the Dean of Students.

[21]Kelman and Staley, "The returning Women Student."

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

TABLE 19

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH SPOUSES OVER RE-ENTRY BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total**
Male	38 (15.7)	204 (84.3)	242 (100.0%)
Female	75 (22.4)	259 (77.3)	334 (99.7%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 20

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH FRIENDS OVER RE-ENTRY BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total**
Male	28 (11.6)	213 (88.0)	241 (99.6%)
Female	57 (17.0)	278 (83.0)	335 (100.0%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 21

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	91 (37.6)	150 (62.0)	241 (99.6%)
Female	116 (34.6)	218 (65.1)	334 (99.7%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 22

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH TIME MANAGEMENT BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	138 (57.0)	103 (42.6)	241 (99.6%)
Female	207 (61.8)	124 (37.0)	331 (98.8%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 23

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH LACK OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	61 (25.2)	178 (73.6)	239 (98.8%)
Female	92 (27.5)	240 (71.6)	332 (99.1%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 24

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH FEAR OF FAILING BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	85 (35.1)	155 (64.0)	240 (99.2%)
Female	130 (38.8)	204 (60.9)	334 (99.7%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 25

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH FEAR OF SUCCEEDING BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Male	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	23 (9.5)	218 (90.1)	241 (99.6%)
Female	44 (13.1)	288 (86.0)	332 (99.1%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 26

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH FEAR OF NOT BEING SMART ENOUGH BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Male	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	84 (34.7)	157 (64.9)	241 (99.6%)
Female	139 (41.5)	196 (58.5)	335 (100.0%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 27

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH ABILITY TO STUDY AND LEARN BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	86 (35.5)	154 (63.6)	240 (99.2%)
Female	129 (38.5)	204 (60.9)	333 (99.4%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 28

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH EMBARRASSMENT AT CHANGING GOALS BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	32 (13.2)	209 (86.4)	241 (99.6%)
Female	47 (14.0)	288 (86.0)	335 (100.0%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 29

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH EMBARRASSMENT AT AGE DIFFERENCE COMPARED TO OTHER STUDENTS BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	30 (12.4)	211 (87.2)	241 (99.6%)
Female	50 (14.9)	283 (84.5)	333 (99.4%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 30

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH COMPETITON WITH STUDENTS' CHILDREN'S GRADES BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	6 (2.5)	234 (96.7)	240 (99.2%)
Female	16 (4.8)	317 (94.6)	333 (99.4%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

TABLE 31

EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY WITH COMPETITION WITH OTHER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' GRADES BY SEX OF RE-ENTERED UNCC STUDENTS (N = 583) 1977

Sex	Applicable to Me	Not Applicable to Me	Total*
Male	49 (20.2)	188 (77.7)	237 (97.9%)**
Female	64 (19.1)	265 (79.1)	329 (98.2%)

*Difference between number and N is due to lack of response (where applicable).

**Difference between percentage and 100% is due to lack of response (where applicable).

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT CHARLOTTE
COUNSELING CENTER

JANUARY, 1977

Dear Student:

Across the nation, increasing number of people are returning to college campuses to continue their interrupted studies. UNCC wants to be aware of your needs and desires as a re-entering student, in order to plan and implement programs to provide additional services for you.

The UNCC Counseling Center is asking you to help by completing the following brief questionnaire. If you have been out of school for two years or more, you are, for the purposes of this questionnaire, considered to be a re-entering student. We would appreciate your reading each question carefully and checking the response that best describes your feeling. You need not sign your name to the questionnaire; your identity is not necessary since the results will be used for group analysis.

Please return the questionnaire no later than February 1, 1977 in the enclosed, stamped envelope. If you have been out of school for less than two years, please discard this study and excuse any inconvenience.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

R. B. Simono

R. B. Simono, Ph.D.
Director, Counseling Center

RBS/ss

Encl.

I. Please take the time to answer the following questions carefully and answer with complete honesty. In this section we would like to deal with services being considered for re-entering students. Check the response that most closely describes how you feel.

For office use only.

		1	2	3	
	Would Use Such A Service	Might Use	Would Not Use		
1. Day care center on/near campus.	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		6
2. Exclusive lounge area.	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		7
3. Social functions with other re-entering students.	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		8
4. Social functions with other re-entering students and spouse or companion.	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		9
5. Peer counselors (a) to assist me	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		10
*(b) I'd like to assist others.	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		11
6. Appropriate orientation to campus.	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		12
7. Specialized credit course for re-entering students.	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		13
8. Designated re-entry admissions/ counselor.	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		14
9. Re-entry column in campus newspaper.	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____		15

II. Counseling Centers across the country offer students various services. This section has two parts. Part A deals with services you believe are available to you now. Part B deals with services you would or would not use if all were available. Please check one answer in Part A and one in Part B.

	Presently Available	Not Sure	Presently Unavailable	I Would Use	I Would Not Use	A	B
1. Speed Reading	(1)____	(2)____	(3)____	(1)____	(2)____	16	40
2. Remedial Reading	(1)____	(2)____	(3)____	(1)____	(2)____	17	41
3. Note Taking Study Skills	(1)____	(2)____	(3)____	(1)____	(2)____	18	42
4. Time Management	(1)____	(2)____	(3)____	(1)____	(2)____	19	43
5. Tutorial Help	(1)____	(2)____	(3)____	(1)____	(2)____	20	44
6. Paper-writing skills	(1)____	(2)____	(3)____	(1)____	(2)____	21	45
7. Brief hand	(1)____	(2)____	(3)____	(1)____	(2)____	22	46
8. Individual counseling for school-related and non-school related difficulties	(1)____	(2)____	(3)____	(1)____	(2)____	23	47

*Please stop by Counseling Center or Dean of Students Office for additional information.

	Presently Available	Not Sure	Presently Unavailable	I Would Use	I Would Not Use	A	B
9. Pre-marital, marital, post-marital counseling	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 24	___ 44
10. Workshops							
a. Anxiety reduction	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 25	___ 49
b. Assertiveness Training	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 26	___ 50
c. Self-Modification	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 27	___ 51
d. Career Development	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 28	___ 52
e. Life Planning	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 29	___ 53
f. Values Clarification	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 30	___ 54
g. Single again	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 31	___ 55
h. Communication Skills	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 32	___ 56
i. Decision making	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 33	___ 57
j. Self-Appreciation	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 34	___ 58
k. Marriage Enrichment	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 35	___ 59
11. Career Exploration	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 36	___ 60
12. Vocation & Personality Testing	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 37	___ 61
13. Evening Counseling	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 38	___ 62
14. Education-Vocational Information	(1)___	(2)___	(3)___	(1)___	(2)___	___ 39	___ 63

III. Some re-entering students have experienced difficulties not encountered in previous schooling. Would you take some time to think about the following and check those you feel apply or have applied to you, and those which have not.

	Applicable To Me	Not Applicable To Me	
1. Difficulty with spouse over re-entering	(1)___	(2)___	___ 64
2. Difficulty with children over re-entering	(1)___	(2)___	___ 65
3. Difficulty with friends over re-entering	(1)___	(2)___	___ 66
4. Difficulty with admissions procedures	(1)___	(2)___	___ 67
5. Difficulty with time management	(1)___	(2)___	___ 68

	Applicable To Me	Not Applicable To Me	
6. Lack of time	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 69
7. Lack of communication skills	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 70
8. Fear of failing	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 71
9. Fear of succeeding	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 72
10. Fear of dulled memory	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 73
11. Fear of not being smart enough	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 74
12. Question ability to study and learn	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 75
13. Embarrassment at changing goals	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 76
14. Embarrassment at age difference compared to other students	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 77
15. Guilt for pursuing my own goals	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 78
16. Guilt for spending family money on my education	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 79
17. Competition with my own children's grades	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 80
	_____ 1	_____ 2	_____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5
18. Excessive competition with other university students' grades	(1)_____	(2)_____	_____ 6

IV. This section involves background material. The purpose of this section is to give to the University a composite picture of the re-entering student, which will facilitate planning and implementation of programs that will benefit you as well as future re-entering students. Please check the item that applies to you.

1. Age
   (1) _____ 29 or younger
   (2) _____ 30 - 34
   (3) _____ 35 - 39
   (4) _____ 40 - 44
   (5) _____ 45 - 49
   (6) _____ 50 - 54
   (7) _____ 55 and older
   _____ 7

2. Sex (1) _____ Male
   (2) _____ Female
   _____ 8

3. Race (1) _____ Black
   (2) _____ White
   (3) _____ Other
   _____ 9

4. Marital Status (1) _____ Single
   (2) _____ Married
   (3) _____ Separated
   (4) _____ Divorced
   (5) _____ Widowed
   _____ 10

5. **How many children do you have?**

(1) _____ 0
(2) _____ 1
(3) _____ 2
(4) _____ 3
(5) _____ 4
(6) _____ 5 or more

_____ 11

6. Highest year of schooling completed

(1) _____ high school
(2) _____ 1 year of college
(3) _____ 2 years of college
(4) _____ 3 years of college
(5) _____ 4 years of college
(6) _____ 5 years of college
(7) _____ 6 or more years of college

_____ 12

7. How long does it take you to get to UMCC?

(1) _____ less than 1 hour
(2) _____ 1 hour or more but less than 1 1/2 hours
(3) _____ 1 1/2 hours or more but less than 2 hours
(4) _____ 2 hours or more but less than 2 1/2 hours
(5) _____ 2 1/2 hours or more

_____ 13

8. Do you work? (1) _____ Yes
(2) _____ No

_____ 14

9. If the answer to question 8 is "yes", how many hours to the nearest hour do you work per week?

(1) _____ 1-4
(2) _____ 5-9
(3) _____ 10-19
(4) _____ 20 or more

_____ 15

10. Since you are a re-entered student, which of the following answers best describe why you left school? You may check one or more.

(1) _____ to go to work
(2) _____ to enter the military
(3) _____ to get married and/or raise a family
(4) _____ lack of funds
(5) _____ completed a degree
(6) _____ I moved
(7) _____ other

_____ 16

11. There may be several reasons for your re-entering school. Check one or more items to explain your situation.

_____ 17

I am re-entering
(1) _____ not to earn a degree
(2) _____ to earn a degree
(3) _____ to advance in present job
(4) _____ to acquire new relationships
(5) _____ to train for a change in occupation
(6) _____ for social status
(7) _____ to grow as a person
(8) _____ other

12. How long was your schooling interrupted?

(1) _____ 2-4 years
(2) _____ 4 1/2-10 years
(3) _____ 10 1/2-15 years
(4) _____ 15 1/2-20 years
(5) _____ more than 20 years

_____ 18

13. What was the 1976 gross income for you and/or spouse?

(1) _____ $4,999 and under
(2) _____ $5,000 - $9,999
(3) _____ $10,000 - $14,999
(4) _____ $15,000 - $19,999
(5) _____ $20,000 and over
(6) Don't know

Thank you for helping us with this survey.